

App. No. 10/012,199
Amendment

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 2, 4-8, 11 and 17 have been amended, claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice, and no claims are being added. Therefore, claims 2-20 are pending in the application.

Minor Amendment to Specification

Applicants have amended the specification to correct a minor typographical error. Specifically, "FIG. 4B" has been changed to --FIG. 4A-- in the two indicated places on page 9 of the specification. Applicants submit that it is quite apparent from the specification and figures that the two paragraphs are referring to FIG. 4A rather than FIG. 4B. This is especially true for the paragraph beginning on line 23 of page 9, which refers to steps 600, 610, 620, 640, etc., which are all included in FIG. 4A. Therefore, no new matter has been entered.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 2, 3, 5 and 7-20 are allowed. Applicants have amended claims 2, 5 and 7 to place them in independent form, which Applicants submit places all of these claims in a condition for allowance.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claims 11-19 because in line 10 of claims 11 and 17 the second occurrence of "a" should be deleted. Applicants have amended claims 11 and 17 to delete the second occurrence of "a".

App. No. 10/012,199
Amendment

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,435,729 to Harwood et al. ("Harwood et al."). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants have canceled claim 1 without prejudice, which renders this rejection moot.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harwood et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,242,863 to Amaya et al. ("Amaya et al."). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants have amended claim 4 to make it dependent on amended independent claim 2, and Applicants have amended claim 6 to make it dependent on amended independent claim 5. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 4 and 6 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 2 and 5, respectively.

Fees Believed to be Due

When this application was filed a fee was paid for a total of 20 claims with 4 claims being independent claims. The above amendment results in there now being a total of 19 claims with 6 claims being independent claims. Therefore, a fee is believed to be due for 2 extra independent claims. A Fee Transmittal is included herewith to cover these fees.

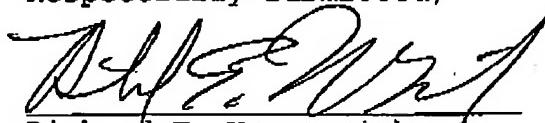
App. No. 10/012,199
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CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicant submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Should there remain any outstanding issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Richard E. Wawrzyniak at (858)552-1311 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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Richard E. Wawrzyniak
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 36,048
(858) 552-1311

Address all correspondence to:

Richard E. Wawrzyniak, Esq.
FITCH, EVEN, TABIN & FLANNERY
120 So. LaSalle Street, Suite 1600
Chicago, Illinois 60603
Customer No. 22242
Telephone No.: (858) 552-1311
Facsimile No.: (858) 552-0095